



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 713645.

GUIDE FOR EVALUATORS

BioMEP Biomedical Engineering and Medical Physics Doctoral Programme



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EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The selection and evaluation process will contain the following stages:

1. Eligibility check – selection of eligible applications
2. Peer-review evaluation – assigned experts provide scores and feedback on applications
3. Interview
4. Final selection

STAGE 1: ELIGIBILITY CHECK

Before the peer-review evaluation of the applications, all applications will be checked according to the eligibility criteria. The eligibility check will be done by the Coordinator of the doctoral programme. In case applicant fails to meet the eligibility criteria and/or the application is incomplete, their application will be declared ineligible and will not be included in the peer-review evaluation. Following criteria should be all fulfilled at the time of the recruitment:

1. Qualification and level of experience:
 - Applicants must hold a higher education degree (i.e., a master's degree or equivalent) in Biomedical/Biomechanical Engineering, Medical Physics, Biophysics or related educational programme;
 - Applicants should not be in possession of a doctorate/PhD degree and should have less than 4 years of research experience (full-time equivalent, as measured from the diploma /qualification that 'gives the rights to embark in a doctoral degree');
2. Mobility rule:
 - Applicants can be of any nationality, but at the time of selection by the host institution they may not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of their host institution for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to their recruitment under the project.



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Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.

Note: 'Date of recruitment' normally means the first day of the employment of the researcher for the purposes of the action (i.e. the starting date indicated in the employment contract/equivalent direct contract)

Note: Years of 'research career' are counted as full-time-equivalent research experience, from the date on which the researcher obtained a degree entitling him/her to embark on a doctoral programme (either in the country in which it was obtained or in which s/he is recruited) — even if the doctorate was never started or envisaged.

Note: the mobility rule applies to the host institution where the candidate is recruited, and not to the partners where the candidate may be seconded as part of their training.

STAGE 2: PEER-REVIEW EVALUATION

The evaluation will be carried out by an independent Advisory board. The Advisory Board will be composed by the following representatives:

- ✓ 2 Internationally distinguished researchers working in the main research areas of Biomedical Engineering and Medical Physics
- ✓ The Advisory Board Director (i.e. the BioMEP doctoral programme Director) will ensure, with the support of the Coordinator that the dates, forms, and selection criteria are accessible to all experts of the panel and deadlines for decision making are met in time.
- ✓ Moreover, the Advisory Board Director will supervise if the selection of the experts follows the 'Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researcher'.

Applications will be independently evaluated by 2 international experts with relevant expertise in the research area addressed in the research proposal. The experts will review each application and will give scores based on the evaluation criteria. They will also review any ethical issues that might be raised within the research project involving research on animals and/or human subjects.

Applicants should be outstanding in all three selection criteria: the excellence of the applicant, quality of the research environment and the scientific quality of the research



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proposal. The experts will judge the merit of an application by assigning points according to the following rules:

Evaluation criteria		
Excellence of the applicant Weighting 70%	Quality of the research environment Weighting 15%	Scientific quality of the research proposal Weighting 15%
Maximum score		
5	5	5
The quality of the applicant's academic qualifications - grade awarded at master's (or higher education) level	Clear motivation for the choice of the research environment (motivation letter)	Scientific/technological quality, including any interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary aspects of the research proposal
The diversity of knowledge and qualifications, research experience and independent thinking	Capacity of the research group to host the applicant and contribution to applicant career development.	Originality and innovative nature of the proposal, relevance of proposal to the BioMEP doctoral programme
Practical experience and transnational and/or inter-sectorial mobility	Competence of the prospective supervisor	Feasibility of carrying out the project within the designated time frame
		Ethical issues (see more details at the end of this Guide)

When assessing points, the experts will utilize a 0-5 scale which will then be multiplied by the weight assigned. Each evaluation criterion will be scored out of 5. Scores will be given with a resolution of one decimal place. An evaluation form will be provided to experts to enable them to conduct a successful and well-documented evaluation process.

Interpretation of the scores	
0 (Fail)	The application fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
1 (Poor)	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner or there are



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	serious inherent weaknesses.
2 (Fair)	The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3 (Good)	The application addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
4 (Very good)	The application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
5 (Excellent)	The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question.

The final score for each application will be calculated as the average of the total scores given by the 2 experts. Based on the decision of experts, only candidates who have passed all thresholds in their evaluation shall be shortlisted in the ranking list. All applicants who failed one of the thresholds shall be informed immediately that their application was not successful. Ranking list will be prepared by the Advisory Board Director according to the final scores. In case of serious complaints, the applications will be reviewed by the Steering committee, who decides on whether the complaint is justified, in case this is within doubt (formal or serious judgment error) then the members of the Steering committee might modify the score of the complaining applicant appropriately. This can happen only in serious cases and has to be approved by the Director of the programme.

STAGE 3: INTERVIEW

A maximum of **30 top-ranking applicants** will be invited for an interview (via Skype), in order to get a better view on their motivation and background. The interviews will be performed by the 1-2 members of the Steering Committee and/or the prospective supervisor from the hosting institution. During the interview, attention will be paid to:

- The ability of applicants to present their research project;
- Motivation;
- Communication skills and English fluency;



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Each criterion will receive a score between 0 and 5. Scores will be given with a resolution of one decimal place. Only applications scoring a minimum of 12 points will be considered for interview.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the applicant's performance during the interview:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Research project presentation: | 30% weight , 0-5 points, threshold 3 points |
| 2. Motivation: | 40% weight , 0-5 points, threshold 3 points |
| 3. English fluency: | 30% weight , 0-5 points, threshold 4 points |

Based on these evaluations, the candidates will be ranked in a priority list.

STAGE 4: FINAL SELECTION

The priority list will be used to select the best 15 applicants and will be provided to the Steering Committee to support decision making. The Steering Committee will perform a final review of the 15 top-ranked successful applicants and will assess if all the research focus areas covered by the doctoral programme are represented in a balanced way.

The successful applicants will be immediately informed by e-mail about the decision and invited to sign an employment contract. All interviewed candidates will receive adequate feedback on their evaluation results. The following 5 candidates, who were shortlisted but not selected, will be informed that they are on the waiting list and that they will be informed about the final decision within 4-6 weeks. The remaining candidates are informed that they were not selected.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Measures the programme takes to ensure equal opportunities (e.g. gender balance, career break, etc.)

- The aim of BioMEP is to select the best ESRs, thus we will ensure equal opportunities for each applicant and the recruitment process will be based solely on merit.
- BioMEP will seek and encourage female researchers in the publicity of job vacancies and will pay a particular attention to ensure that there is not gender discrimination during selection process.



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- BioMEP will not discriminate in any way on the basis of gender, age, ethnics, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion and social or economic condition.

Applicants after a career break (i.e. maternity/parental leave, working in industry) will be encouraged to submit their application having the same opportunities as applicants without career breaks. However, the applicants will need to ensure that the description of the break and its reason is clearly presented in their CVs. Any mobility experience or a change from one discipline or sector to another will be considered as a valuable contribution to the professional skills of the applicant.

ETHICAL ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Confidentiality and non-disclosure:

- When accepting the applications, all experts will be required to sign an agreement, declaring that they agree to disclose beforehand any known conflicts of interest and to maintain absolute confidentiality of applications and associated documents they have received

Conflicts of interest:

Definition of the conflict of interest: a conflict of interest exists if an expert:

- was involved in the preparation of the application
- stands to benefit directly and indirectly if the proposal is accepted
- has some indirect ties to one of the applicants (same organization) or knows the applicants (family, personal, scientific relationship).

All experts will be asked to declare if they have any conflict of interest in relation to the application that they are reviewing. In case such conflict is declared, the application is assigned to another expert who has no conflicts of interest.

Ethical issues - research proposals

All research proposals that envisage the use of animals will adhere to the national regulations on animal experiments and to the Directive 2010/63/EU on the Protection of Animals used



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for Scientific Purposes. The 3Rs policy of Refinement, Reduction and Replacement towards the use of animals for scientific procedures (99/167/EC: Council Decision of 25/1/99) will be adopted. After recruitment of the ESRs at their Host organizations, evidence must be provided that local ethics approval has been acquired (i.e. copy of letter from local committee sent to the BioMEP coordinator). The experimental procedures will follow the FELASA recommendations and all animal procedures will be approved by the local ethical committees and will adhere to the national and international laws and provisions regarding the protection of animals.

All research proposals that envisage the storage of patient and healthy subject data within established databases and the transfer of data between different partners in different countries will conform to all relevant data protection legislation within each individual country.